

MOTOCROSS

I L L U S T R A T E D

MXON ISSUE

TEAM USA HISTORY
ERNEE 2005

Jordi Tixier - Red Bull KTM

Antonio Cairoli and Jordi Tixier
WORLD CHAMPIONS

Ray Archer/KTM image



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CONSISTENCY PAYS OFF



It is hard to imagine that the little kid from Sicily who arrived on the scene in 2004 would now some 10 years later be very close to being the best Grand Prix rider of all time. What is even more amazing is the fact with a little luck he could have gone from 2005 until 2004 undefeated, so close was he in the battles for the championships he lost.

STORY GEOFF MEYER IMAGES RAY ARCHER

His 2006 loss to Christophe Pourcel went down to the last round and with all respect to Pourcel is seemed like Cairoli wasn't giving it 100% in the early going of the season. Maybe a little over confident after his world title victory in 2005. In 2008 he was in a heated battle with Tommy Searle and Tyla Rattray with all three close in the points race when he twisted his knee in the Grand Prix of South Africa and was ruled out for the rest of the season. No rider in the history of the sport has

won world motocross championships the way Cairoli has, no rider has won six titles in a row and no rider has put together as many GP wins in such a short time. He finished out of the top three in motos on just six occasions, and won 15 of the 34 motos run. He also picked up nine GP wins to take his tally to 72 GP victories in his career. Just 29 GP wins to go and he equals the great Stefan Everts at the very top of the all-time winners list. Of course our King of GP motocross is Everts, and for me he remains the greatest, but Cai-

roli is closing in fast and it will take a huge effort by Ryan Villopoto in 2015 to stop Cairoli from winning his ninth title. As for his season, despite the loss of his father and a lack of the “real” Antonio Cairoli form, he did more than enough.

“It has been a very difficult season, with many ups and downs and I was not always able to get a good physical condition; my preparation, has been affected by all the personal problems that occurred me this year. I want to thank my team, KTM, my girlfriend Jill and everyone who works with me, my sponsors and my fans for this difficult season; now I have to focus on the Grand Prix of Nations that will be in Kegums, Latvia in two weeks. We don’t have so much time to train with the 250 and to adapt my riding style, but we will do everything we can to get prepared for this challenge.”

While the Sicilian hasn’t had the perfect season, despite winning a majority of the GP’s and clearly being the best in the MXGP class, his biggest rival Jeremy Van Horebeek did have pretty much the perfect season for him.

Van Horebeek finished in the top three in motos 21 times from the 34 motos run, and his run of podiums finishes ran from round two until round 13 when he finished fourth. He followed that fourth place in Finland with a GP victory in Loket, Czech Republic. While the last three rounds were poor by his previous 13 he still finished a clear second overall in the series points, 54 points more than Strijbos.

Having been picked up by the Rinaldi Yamaha team Van Horebeek looked comfortable straight away. Many expected him to struggle on the Yamaha, as many riders hadn’t felt comfortable on that bike for some time, but after a lot of testing the combination of Yamaha and Van Horebeek looked brilliant.

Always smooth, never really making big mistakes and staying consistent was the rule for the Belgian, much like Cairoli the Yamaha factory riders main objective was









to be on the podium every week, and he didn't miss out on too many.

"I like to think I have a style that is very smooth, I don't like making risks and crashing and this year I was able to really put together a lot of solid finishes. It is a good result for me, and now I look forward to going to the Motocross of Nations and testing my speed against guys like Dungey and Tomac."

The third rider in the MXGP points was another rider who doesn't take big risks and is always close to the podium. Kevin Strijbos who finished second in the world nearly 10 years ago (second in 2006 and second in 2007) has shown amazing consistency in a major part of his career.

Picked up by Sylvain Geboers again after running in privateer or other factory teams for a few years it was clear that Strijbos felt at home in the Belgian team. Of course the Rockstar Energy Suzuki factory team is considered one of the best in the paddock and Geboers often gets the best from his riders. Strijbos who admitted himself that he maybe too the life of a race not seriously enough early in his career was a different rider in 2014 and his results slowly got better and better.

While he might have gotten a little luck with both Max Nagl, Clement Desalle and Gautier Paulin all crashing out of the series and missing a bunch of rounds, that is the strength of Strijbos, not making mistakes and not missing races.

"Third overall for the year and this was my goal. It was hard because of a pre-season injury, but in the second half of the season I was going well and I'm happy about that. We worked week-by-week and step-by-step and once we came to Loket it reached a good point. I've had some bad years but to be back in the top three is great."

No doubt these three riders will line up in 2015 with the same goals, run smooth, race clean and finish as many races on the podium as possible. It sounds simple doesn't it, but only these three were capable of doing it in 2014.

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SAVE THE DATE



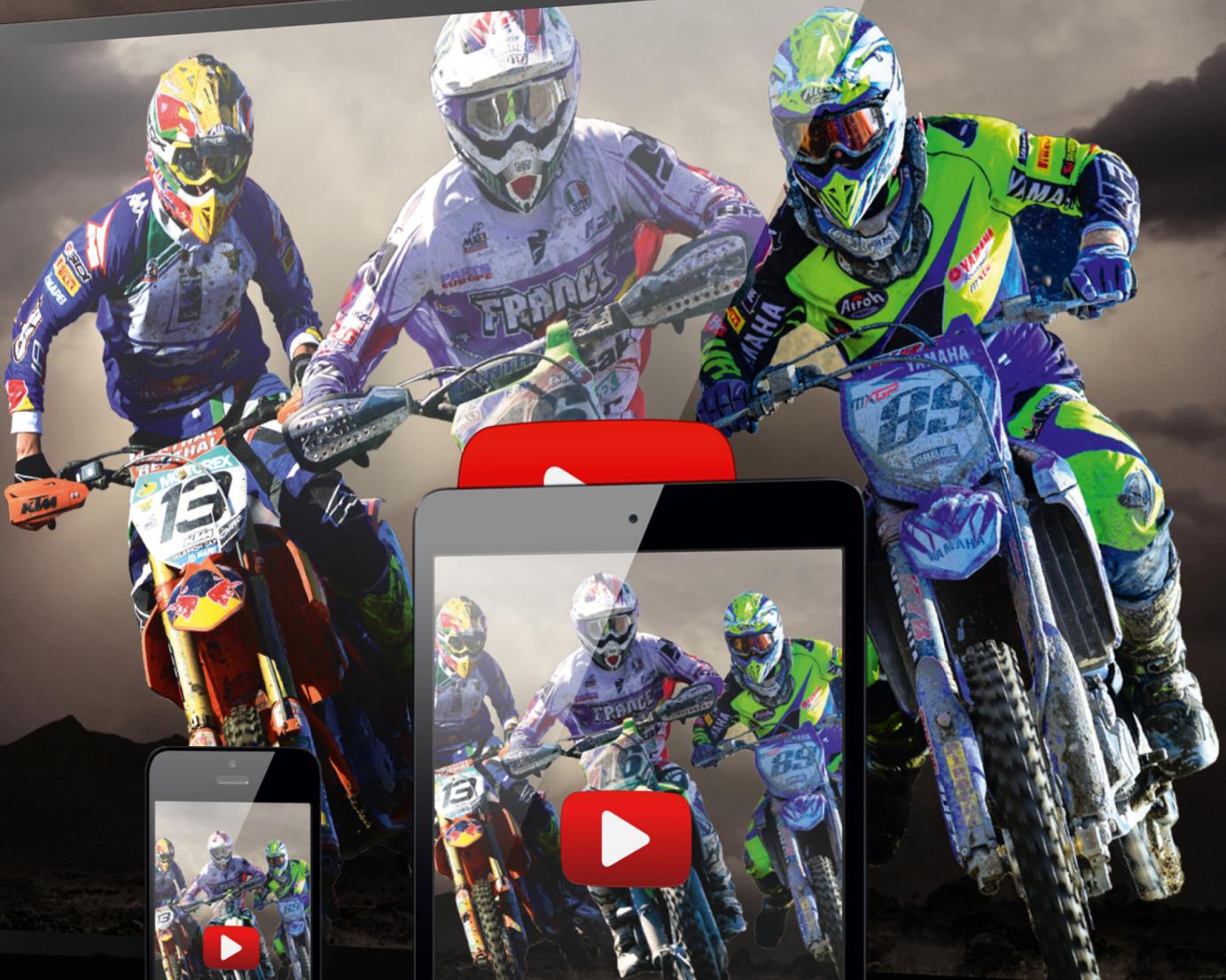
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Monster Energy Motocross of Nations

2005 AND ERNEE

There is nothing better in life than a good run of momentum, and the Monster Energy Motocross of Nations probably has more momentum going than any other off-road event in the world. It all started in 2005 when Ricky Carmichael, Ivan Tedesco and Kevin Windham arrived at the undulating circuit of Ernée, in France, just a few hundred kilometres from the beautiful city of Paris.

What made Ernee so special? Was it the fact Ricky Carmichael was riding in the middle of one of the most dominant careers the sport has seen, the stunning performance of Ben Townley, or the magnificent crowd that sat in the perfect sunshine to watch this classic event?

It isn't hard to look back at Ernee with a huge smile and remember the event for all those things. For some reason the MXoN always seems to get lucky with weather, or at least as long as it isn't run in England that is.

Think about it, the last 10 years the MXoN hasn't seen too much in the way of rain, at least not when it mattered. Last year in Teutschenthal was perfect, as was Lommel in 2012, St Jean d'Angely in 2011, Thunder Valley in 2010, Franciacorta in 2009, Donington Park in 2008, Budds Creek in 2007 and Matterley Basin despite huge thunder storms on the Saturday, turned into perfect weather on the Sunday. So come on Kegums, Latvia, turn on the perfect conditions.

But back to Ernee. Stefan Everts and Ricky Carmichael have always had big respect for each other, back in 2004 at the Zolder held MXoN Everts invited RC to his house for a barby. While they were both considered the best of the best in AMA and GP, they only met on five occasions in MXoN. Their first meeting was in 1998 at the Foxhills mudbath, Everts won that one easily, they met again in 1999 in Brazil, 2004 in Zolder and their final battle was 2005 in Ernee. Of course RC got the better of Everts in those last two, as Everts had a terrible time at the '05 event. Everts went 5-9 and his second moto score wasn't counted as it was Belgium's worse moto result. RC of course went 1-1.

Ben Townley, what could we say about this guy, at this race. Winning a moto against Kevin Windham, chasing RC in another and not letting him get too far ahead. Townley should have been a multiple AMA motocross champion, unfortunately apart from his classic battle with Ryan Villopoto in the 2007 AMA 250 title his Amer-









ican career saw more injuries than wins. None us who attended Ernee will forget that day in the sun, when he proved to the World that he was capable of beating nearly anyone. Townley went 1-2 in Ernee and looked brilliant in doing it.

Kevin Windham was the king of showmanship and at the 05 MXoN he looked brilliant. Helping his team to victory and looking stylish the whole weekend. This image of Windham was shot at the top of the circuit and I remember it clearly. Standing next to British photographer Simon Cudby we knew this was the place to be. Nestled up against the fence as Windham did his magic. Cudby's image was on the cover of RacerX magazine in their MXoN issue, and mine made the back page. What I probably enjoyed most about the image was just chilling with Cudby in the sun and watching the best in the World go around. Windham did get beaten by Townley twice and also by Vuillemin, Philippaerts and Ramon, but his performance went a long way in helping Team USA win. -

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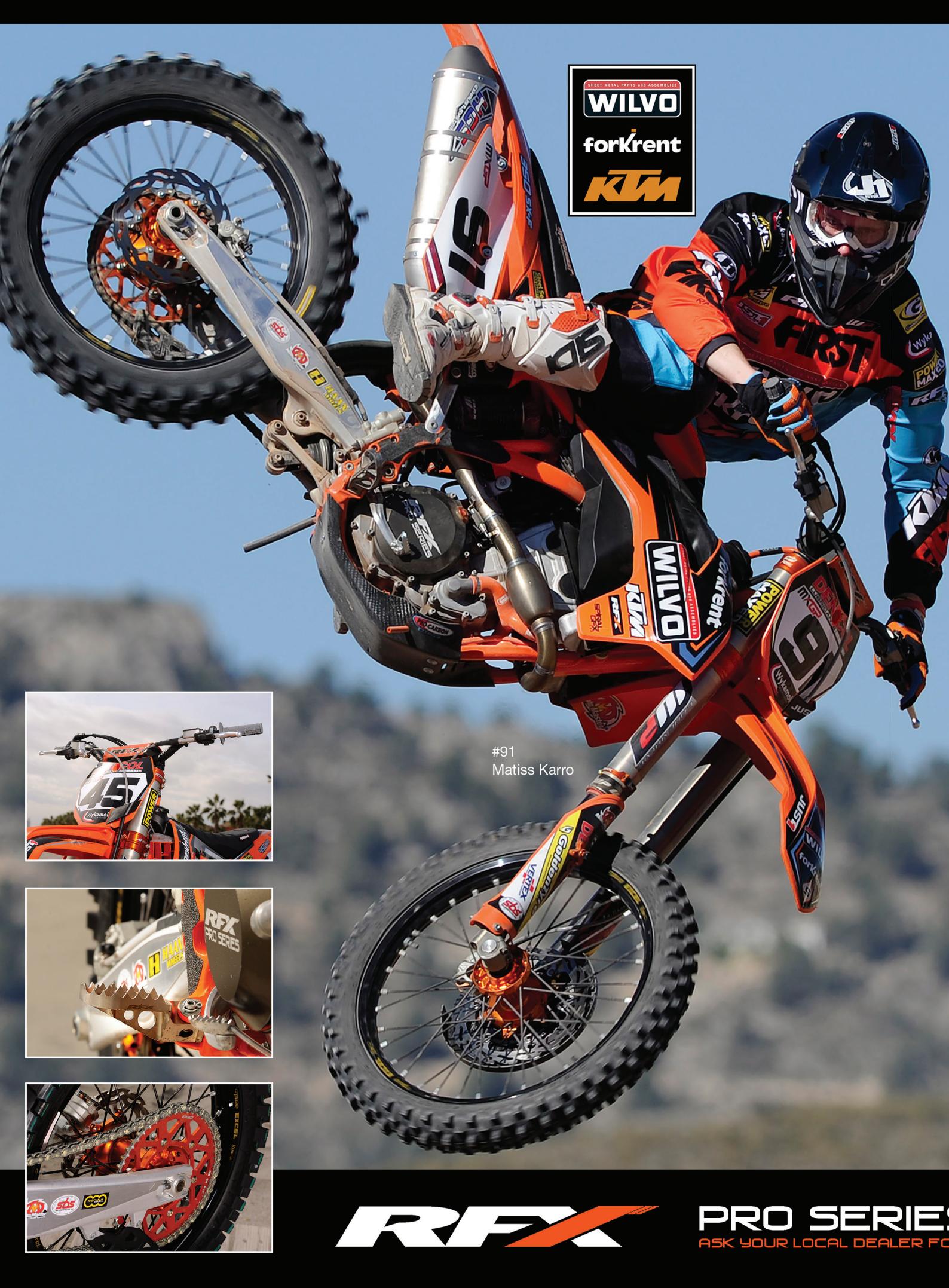


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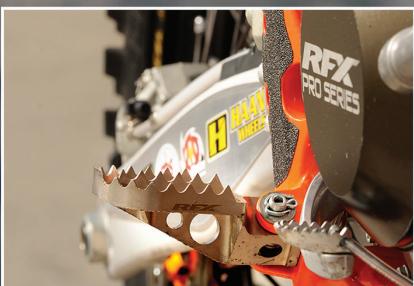


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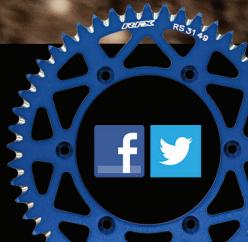
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Roger De Coster

Monster Energy Motocross of Nations

MXoN STORIES

TEAM USA

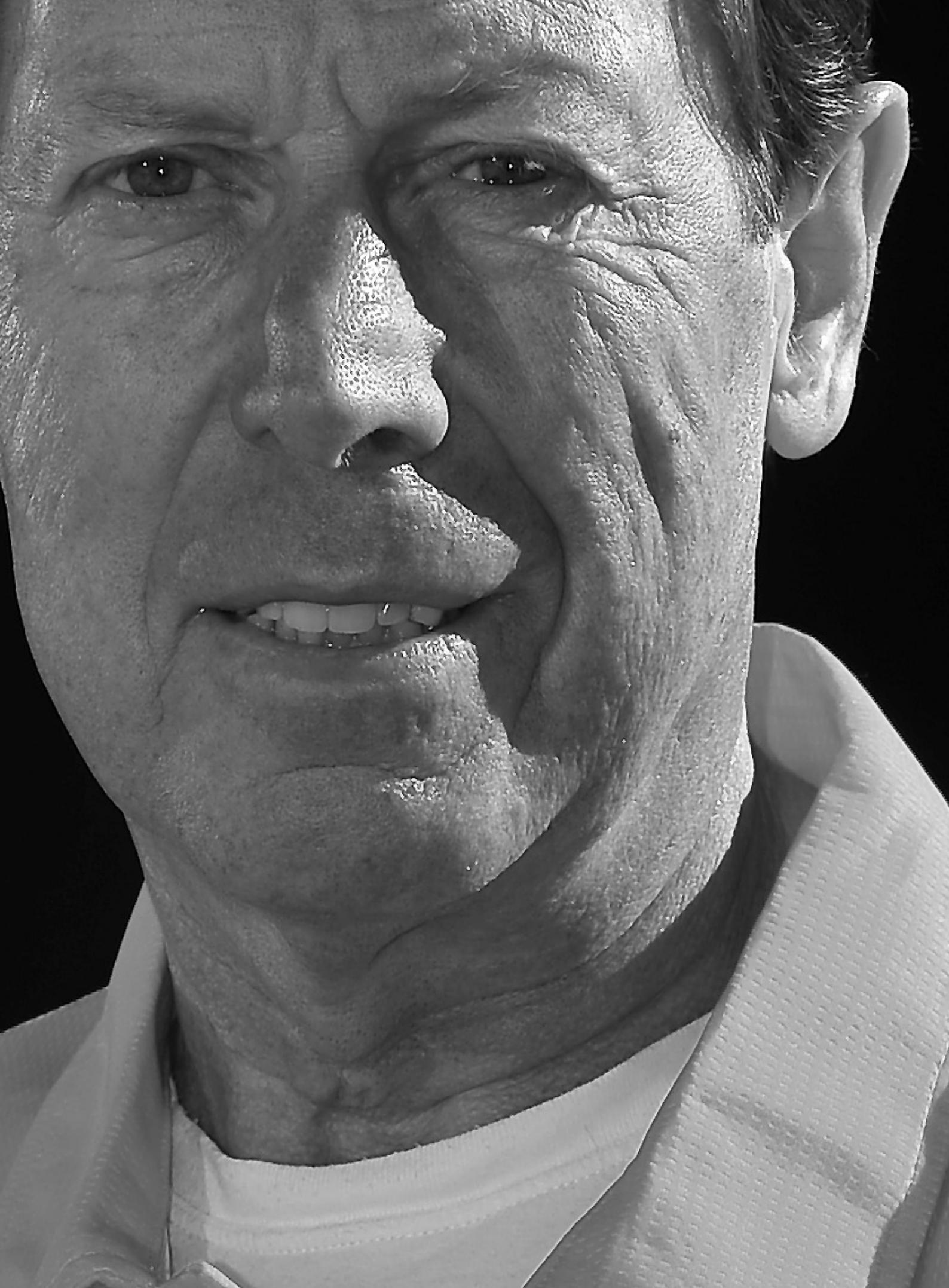
Roger De Coster has always been a special character in the sport of Motocross. One of the true legends of the sport, with five 500cc motocross world titles, and a long list of MXoN victories. He has also been the team manager of the American effort since their first success in 1981 and continues to be an important part of the American legacy at this event. Here are some of his memories.

The high point of 1981 was that we (America) won the Trophee and Motocross des Nations. The des Nations events mean a lot to me. They are very important, and were always the biggest events of the year. Everyone talks about this guy is the fastest, or the 125 guys are fastest, or the 250 guys are best. But the des Nations puts everyone together in the same class at the same time. One week you rode the 250 event (Trophee des Nations) and the next week you rode the 500 event (Motocross des Nations).

We could see the potential in the Honda bikes and team members for those events. Our guys were not winning at the time though. Suzuki had Mark Barnett winning the 125 class and in supercross. And Kent Howerton on Suzuki was strong in the 250 class. Our team was Johnny O'Mara, Chuck Sun, Danny LaPorte and Donnie Hansen. Towards the end of the year, our results started to improve. We thought 'We need to go to the des Nations'. Towards the end of August, as the des Nations approached, there seemed

to be a lack of interest. No one seemed to be able to get their act together. No one was excited. Finally, I thought to myself 'Why don't we send all Honda riders as the US team?' At the time, I think that American Honda did not know too much about the des Nations events. They did not know what it would cost to send the entire team. I took a chance, but we did it. Now things were in motion. But by the time the events were to come about, the bosses at Honda started to complain, after realizing how much money we were spending on this thing. But now it was too late to do anything different. Plus we had the magazine Motocross Action with Dick Miller and Larry Maiers in helping us raise monies for the team. That fund raising and Honda paid for the entire thing.

The first event was the Trophee des Nations in Lommel, Belgium. I had problems with myself to a certain extent because it felt strange coming and representing the US. I had always tried to win as a rider for Belgium. In the Trophee des Nations, as a member of the Belgian team, I was part of the winning team ten years



in a row. We also won six times in the open class (500cc - Motocross des Nations). It felt weird. But what made it easier was that the Belgian motorcycle federation never asked me for help. I had offered my help for the des Nations teams earlier to them, but they were not interested. That made me feel easier about helping the US team. Also, before the race, I had asked the Lommel club to help with financial support for travel expenses. They said 'What are you going to do here on a sand track with an American team? You are going to be slaughtered here. We are going to kill you. If you were going to come here and were the main draw, we might consider it, but you are! also-rans'. So that motivated me even more.

Our team went over early. We went to sand tracks and practiced and practiced and practiced. We initially had a lot of bike problems because we had no experience in the US riding on sand like that. But we worked thru the whole thing, and by race-time we were ready.

Of course, everything was fine when we won. It was one of the greatest wins ever. And Honda was able to get so much advertising out of that race. I think the wins also gave a lot of confidence to the team and our riders. The following year would be good for us. That was the spring-board for us to do well for the next number of years.

For me personally my first two ever MXoN were in Unadilla in 1987 and France in 1988. Unadilla was a complete wash-out and the highlight for me was getting drunk with Jeff Leisk in a bar down the road from the circuit.

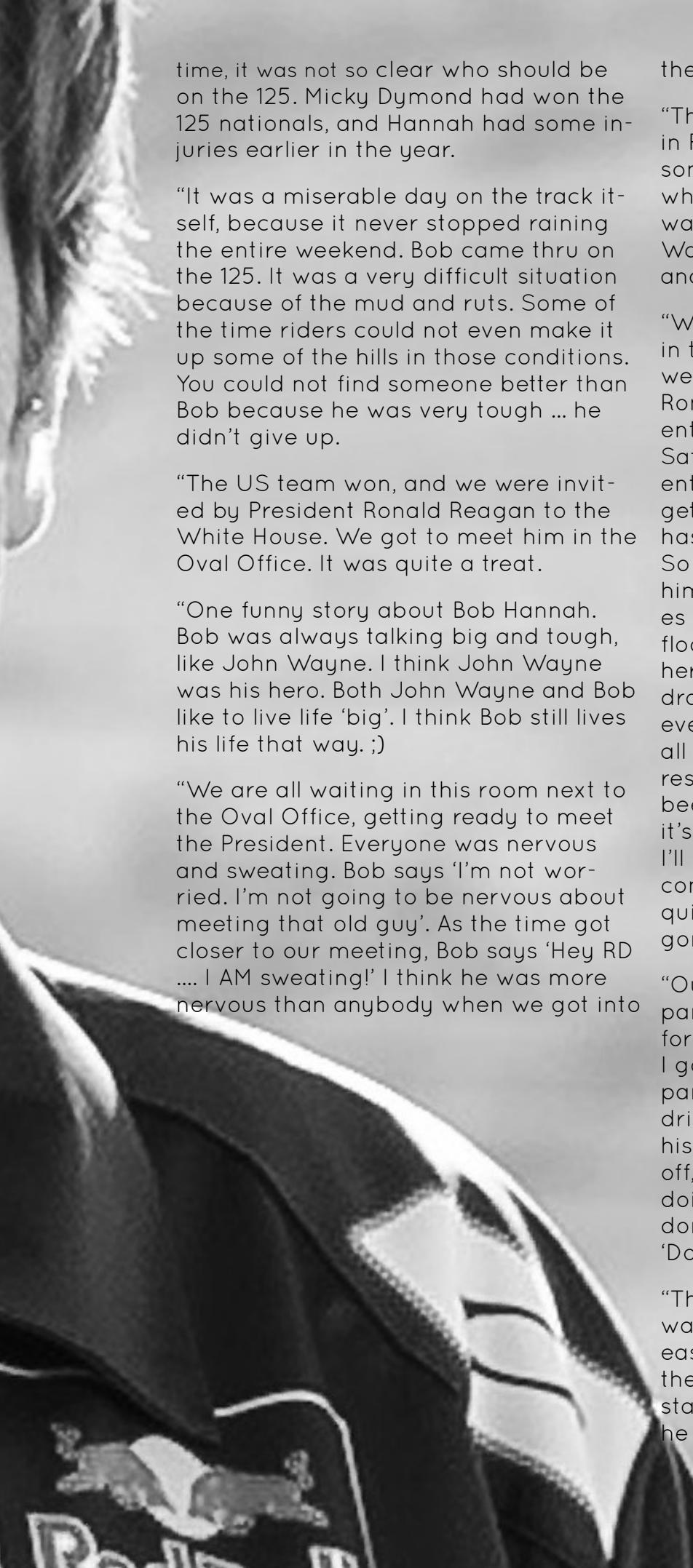
For Roger De Coster no doubt there were more important things to worry about. Check out his comments from those 87 and 88 events.

"I was the team manager for the des Nations team. It was the first and only time it's been in the US, at Unadilla. Bob Hannah really wanted to be on the team. He had been on the team before in '78 and '79, but had









time, it was not so clear who should be on the 125. Micky Dymond had won the 125 nationals, and Hannah had some injuries earlier in the year.

"It was a miserable day on the track itself, because it never stopped raining the entire weekend. Bob came thru on the 125. It was a very difficult situation because of the mud and ruts. Some of the time riders could not even make it up some of the hills in those conditions. You could not find someone better than Bob because he was very tough ... he didn't give up.

"The US team won, and we were invited by President Ronald Reagan to the White House. We got to meet him in the Oval Office. It was quite a treat.

"One funny story about Bob Hannah. Bob was always talking big and tough, like John Wayne. I think John Wayne was his hero. Both John Wayne and Bob like to live life 'big'. I think Bob still lives his life that way. ;)

"We are all waiting in this room next to the Oval Office, getting ready to meet the President. Everyone was nervous and sweating. Bob says 'I'm not worried. I'm not going to be nervous about meeting that old guy'. As the time got closer to our meeting, Bob says 'Hey RD I AM sweating! I think he was more nervous than anybody when we got into

the Oval Office.

"The Motocross des Nations was in France in 1988, and I remember something about that. Ron Lechien, who was with Kawasaki at the time, was part of the US team. It was Wardy on the 125, Ricky on the 250, and Lechien in the open class.

"We were staying in this little hotel in the eastern part of France. We were all a little bit worried about Ronnie. We all knew how much talent he had, but he had a wild past. Saturday night before the race, the entire team is to have dinner together. Everyone is there, everyone has started eating, but no Ronnie. So I go looking for Ronnie, and I find him in his hotel room. There are cases of beer everywhere. Beer on the floor. Beer on his night table. Beers here. Beers there. I'm not saying he drank them all, but there was beer everywhere. I said 'Ronnie, we are all waiting for you! Get over to the restaurant! And what about all these beers?' Ronnie said 'Don't worry, it's just all my friends. "Don't worry, I'll be over there in a minute.' So he comes over to the dinner, eats really quickly, and before anyone else, he's gone again!

"Our hotel rooms were across the parking lot from the restaurant. Before I am even done with my dinner, I go looking for him. As I enter the parking lot, I see Ronnie starting to drive away with a couple of girls in his car. I stopped him before he took off, and said 'Ronnie! What are you doing? I am going to kill you if you don't ride great tomorrow!' He says 'Don't worry R.D., I'll be fine.'

"The next morning I make sure to wake him up. He didn't wake up too easy. We got him to the track. Once the gate dropped and the racing started, he rode so well, it was like he was riding by himself."



Two Motocross of Nations heroes Georges Jobe and Roger De Coster





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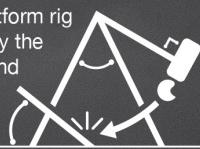
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Jordi Tixier

WORLD MOTOCROSS CHAMPION 2014

STORY GEOFF MEYER IMAGES RAY ARCHER/KTM

Sometimes special things happen to people who deserve it. Red Bull KTM Factory rider Jordi Tixier seems like a good kid, very polite, friendly and busy with his social media and promoting himself as a motocross racer. Sometimes good guys do finish first, and in this case it seems being a world motocross champion was his destiny.





I don't think anyone could have expected Tixier to be World MX2 champion in 2014 after his very average start to the 2014 season. As had been his biggest problem in 2013 the pressure of being a Red Bull KTM factory rider played heavy on his shoulders and his results suffered.

No doubt there is a lot of pressure being in the biggest Motocross team in the World, the team that has dominated the MXGP and MX2 Championship for some time now.

Starting the season with 7-7 results in Qatar was disappointing for the Frenchman, who finished second in the World to Jeffrey Herlings in 2013. Unfortunately it didn't get much better since round one in Qatar.

Holding down eighth place in the MX2 series points after three round is not where he had hoped to be when the season started in Qatar. With his best result coming in round two in Thailand when he went 5-6 for 31 points and seventh overall. Tixier also suffered from an injury in Thailand, which didn't help his cause.

"I did get good starts in Thailand, and my first laps were not so bad, but after about 15 minutes the pain was too bad. I tried to find a solution but it was not enough to keep me fit for the entire race. I just did my best and gave all I could. I had a similar start to the season in 2013 but came back strong to finish second overall, so I was confident for the season ahead."

With Jeffrey Herlings out of the Grand Prix of Brazil the pressure mounted as Tixier would have been expected to fight for the GP victory, however that wasn't even close to being the case as he battled with the circuit and big crashes.

"I never had a good feeling for the track right through the weekend, and I also didn't have the speed. I crashed three times in each race

and twice I finished twelfth so I am really disappointed. In practice I am good but I am not so good in the race so it is something in my head I have to try to sort out."

What Tixier did need to work on is his mental approach as the 2014 version of the MX2 class was a lot stronger than the 2013 version and if he was not mentally stronger this year, then it was going to be tough to climb up from that eighth place he held, and the 33 points he was behind second placed man Glenn Coldenhoff.

Adding to the pressure was the fact Jeffrey Herlings was still in danger of being ruled out of the season if his shoulder didn't respond to rest. There were a handful of MX2 riders who were awaiting the chance to fight for a World title, and Tixier needs to be ready for that challenge. Arco De Trento was the final answer if he could handle the pressure or not.

"Of course everyone was asking the same question. I didn't have as much pressure as 2013, but I made some mistakes and I wasn't focused on my riding. I was really disappointed after the first four GP's, but I came through in Bulgaria for my first podium, and again in Valkenswaard. I had to stay on the podium and get to second on the box, because I was only third in Holland."

As with any top line motocross rider, it isn't always just about the competitor, but also getting the bike set up perfect for both the riding conditions and the rider.

"We changed many things with the bike and everyone is doing a great job in the team. I am pretty happy about my bike and team at the moment, and I know we can continue to improve and my results will also improve."

What Tixier does know is that the MX2 class is stacked with riders looking to get onto the podium, and no matter how hard he works there





are a bunch of guys looking to knock him off the top three steps.

"I think it is tougher (the MX2 class) than in 2013. We have seven or eight riders that can be on the box and you need to ride well every weekend, so we need to take a good start and have good speed for 35 minutes and always fight for your place."

As mentioned in the intro, Tixier is also trying to keep his ride in the biggest, strongest team in the GP paddock, the Red Bull KTM Factory team. It is a tall order, although Tixier feels the support from KTM is there.

"Of course, it is always difficult, this was my last year with KTM and I needed good results to stay on the team, or to get a good ride with somebody else. It was up to me to get my best and everyone trusted me, so that was good."

By the time the series hit Germany the Frenchman was riding his normal consistent self and moving into second place in the series points.

"In Germany it is my third podium in a row, so I was happy about that. I got a third it was a good weekend I had a good feeling on the track. In the first moto I got the holeshot and I didn't have a good feeling in the first minutes. I didn't have a good momentum, the first moto but I came back at the end of the moto. The second moto I felt better and was able to get third overall. Some corners were very wet and I came back and I had a good fight with Febvre and Ferrandis, so the French riders were doing well."

As the series got closer to its end and Herlings again got an injury it seemed like something changed in the mind of Tixier, his confidence grew even more and he gained points on Herlings as the Dutchman sat on the couch with a busted leg.

"I didn't even want to think about the championship. I just wanted to score as many points as possible and ride to my potential. Once I was crowded in my head I still couldn't believe it. After I crashed in the first laps of the second moto in Mexico, I thought the championship was over and I tried to give it everything. Then when I crossed the finish line I thought, 'I did it' and it's really nice to win like this. I was really fast on the track, I caught almost everyone and I rode aggressive."







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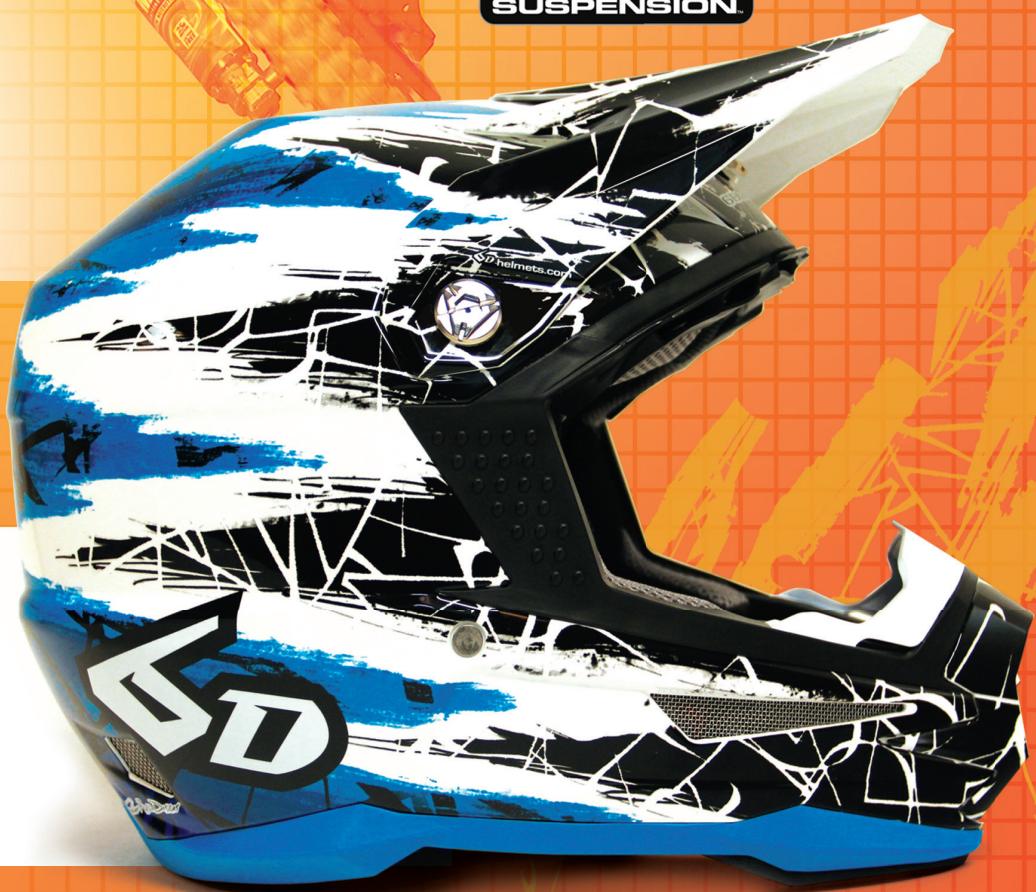
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MONSTER ENERGY MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS

WHAT DOES THE MXoN MEAN?

Images Ray Archer/KTM, Geoff Meyer and Simon Cudby

The Motocross of Nations is an annual team motocross race, where riders representing their country meet at what is billed as the “Olympics of Motocross”. The event has been staged since 1947, where the team of Bill Nicholson, Fred Rist and Bob Ray, representing Great Britain, took home the Chamberlain Trophy for the first time. The event as it stands today is an amalgamation of three separate events, the original Motocross des Nations, raced with 500cc motorcycles, the Trophée des Nations, raced with 250cc motorcycles, and the Coupe des Nations, for 125cc motorcycles. Before 1984, the three events were held in different locations on different weekends, whereafter they were combined into a single event with one rider per class.



The scoring for the event works on the position system, i.e. first place is awarded one point, second place two, etc. Each class (currently MX1, MX2 and Open) races twice, each time against one of other two classes, for a total of three races. The worst score of three races is dropped, and the lowest combined score wins.

The event's name has been officially anglicised (as Motocross of Nations "MXON") since 2004, when Youthstream was awarded promotional rights for the World Motocross Grand Prix, although the general moniker Des Nations or MXDN is still very much in use.

Historically Great Britain dominated the early years, before the competition became more fierce. With the rise of motocross in North America from the 1970s, the USA embarked on a famous winning streak, lasting 13 years from 1981 to 1993.

THIRTY YEARS OF WINNERS

2014 Kegums, Latvia

2013 Belgium: Ken De Dycker / Jeremy Van Horebeek / Clement Desalle

2012 Germany: Maximilian Nagl / Ken Roczen / Marcus Schiffer

2011 USA: Ryan Dungey / Blake Baggett / Ryan Villopoto

2010 USA: Ryan Dungey / Trey Canard / Andrew Short

2009 USA: Ryan Dungey / Jake Weimer / Ivan Tedesco

2008 USA: James Stewart, Jr. / Ryan Villopoto / Tim Ferry

2007 USA: Ricky Carmichael / Ryan Villopoto / Tim Ferry

2006 USA: James Stewart, Jr. / Ryan Villopoto / Ivan Tedesco

2005 USA: Ricky Carmichael / Kevin Windham / Ivan Tedesco

2004 Belgium: Stefan Everts / Steve Ramon / Kevin Strijbos

2003 Belgium: Stefan Everts / Steve Ramon / Joël Smets





2002 Italy: Andrea Bartolini / Alessio Chiodi / Alessandro Puzar

2001 France: Yves Demaria / Luigi Se-guy / David Vuillemin

2000 USA: Ricky Carmichael / Ryan Hughes / Travis Pastrana

1999 Italy: Andrea Bartolini / Alessio Chiodi / Claudio Federici

1998 Belgium: Marnicq Bervoets / Pat-
rick Caps / Stefan Everts

1997 Belgium: Marnicq Bervoets / Ste-
fan Everts / Joël Smets

1996 USA: Jeff Emig / Steve Lamson /
Jeremy McGrath

1995 Belgium: Marnicq Bervoets / Ste-
fan Everts / Joël Smets

1994 Great Britain: Rob Herring / Paul
Malin / Kurt Nicoll

1993 USA: Jeff Emig / Mike Kiedrowski
/ Jeremy McGrath

1992 USA: Jeff Emig / Mike LaRocco /
Billy Liles

1991 USA: Damon Bradshaw / Mike
Kiedrowski / Jeff Stanton

1990 USA: Damon Bradshaw / Jeff
Stanton / Jeff Ward

1989 USA: Mike Kiedrowski / Jeff Stan-
ton / Jeff Ward

1988 USA: Rick Johnson / Ron Lechien
/ Jeff Ward

1987 USA: Bob Hannah / Rick Johnson
/ Jeff Ward

1986 USA: David Bailey / Rick Johnson
/ Johnny O'Mara

1985 USA: David Bailey / Ron Lechien /
Jeff Ward

1984 USA: David Bailey / Rick Johnson
/ Johnny O'Mara / Jeff Ward

1983 USA: David Bailey / Mark Barnett /
Brock Glover / Jeff Ward

1982 USA: David Bailey / Danny Chan-
dler / Jim Gibson / Johnny O'Mara











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Josh Coppins and Joel Smets - Geoff Meyer image







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Stefan Everts and Namur - Geoff Meyer image



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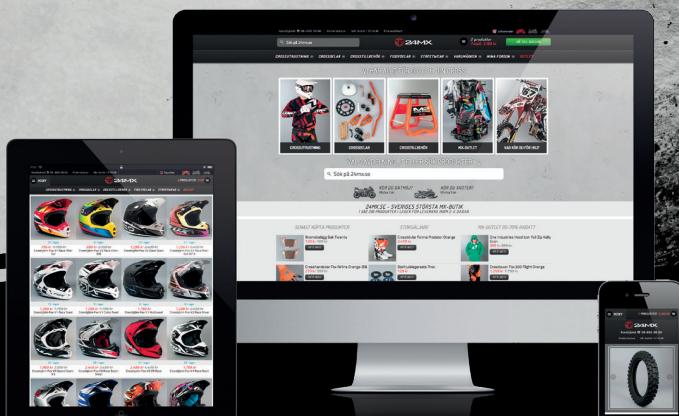


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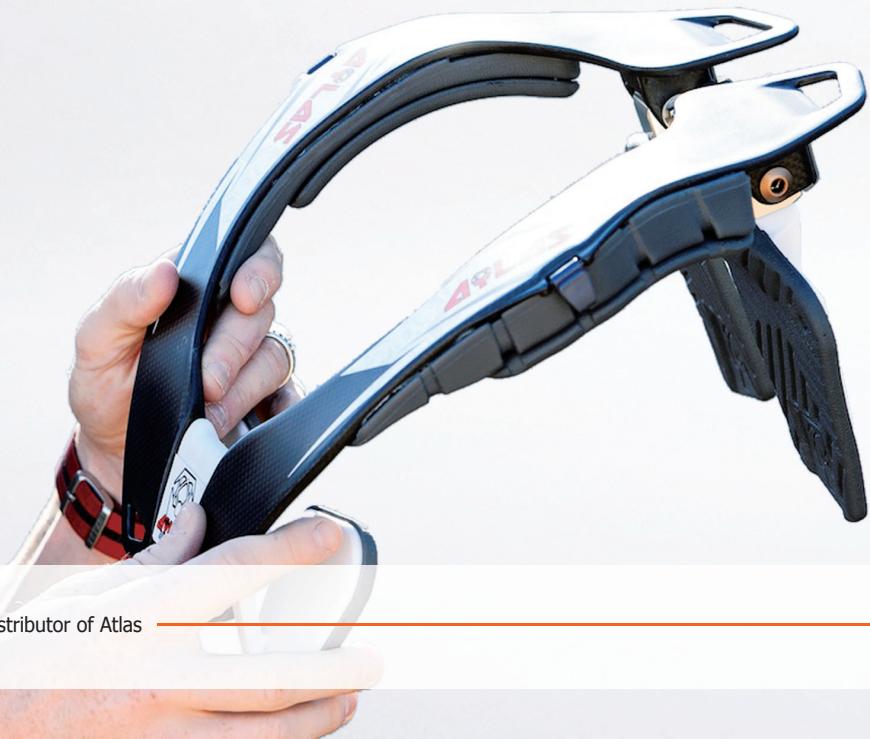


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MONSTER ENERGY MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS

TEAM USA FAVOURITES

STORY BY GEOFF MEYER IMAGES BY SIMON CUDBY

There is no team stronger in the Monster Energy Moto-cross of Nations. Team USA. More riders to pick from, a bigger budget, and a team manager with more experience in this event than any other person. Even in poor form Team USA nearly won last years MXoN, that in itself says enough bout the pride this country has.







We might love to see them lose, but we love to see them, their input into this event is head and shoulders above that of any other team. Only Team Belgium (with all riders fit) have a chance of battling side by side with the Americans, and with Clement Desalle out, the depth of the great motocross country is on show.

The love/hate relationship we have with Team USA doesn't really have anything to do with the riders, the American riders have always shown respect to the GP series and riders, but sometimes the American media like to boast of their huge advantage over the Europeans, or GP riders.

What probably upsets the European people and the rest of the world is, the American media are probably correct. Sure guys like Cairoli, Paulin, Desalle, Herlings, De Dycker, Nagl, Roczen and many others have beaten the American riders at the MXoN, but if you look at 2013 and the effort by Team USA in 2013, when both Ryan Dungey 6-7 and Justin Barcia 4-11 rode poorly, not to mention Eli Tomac the standout of the American team crashed hard and scored a 16th (that should have been a top three) they still only lost by three points to Belgium. That is how good Team USA are.

What we can expect in 2014





In my honest opinion, it could get ugly. Dungey is coming off a defeat in the AMA 450 championship. Tomac is coming off a mixed season and of course Jeremy Martin is the AMA 250 champion and looks in brilliant form.

Now with Clement Desalle, Ken Roczen, Jeffrey Herlings, Jordi Tixier, Romain Febvre and Ken De Dycker all out with injuries, and Antonio Cairoli and Tommy Searle moving down to the MX2 class it couldn't get much easier for Team USA. While they go in with their three best motocross riders (going on the results from this year's AMA Nationals) their favourite role bigger than it's been for a long time.

Of the top three in the FIM MX2 championship none are racing in this year's MXoN, and as mentioned our World MXGP champion is also not racing the bigger bikes. Still I see the GP guys putting in some solid rides.

Jeremy Van Horebeek, Gautier Paulin, Max Nagl and Kevin Strijbos have every chance to battle and beat Dungey and Tomac, and Searle and Cairoli can battle and beat Martin. In saying that, I think Team USA riders will enjoy Kegums, and will all finish top three in their respective class.

With no other team really having three solid riders (possibly Team France), it should be a walk in the park for Team USA to add victory number 23 to their already impressive MXoN history.

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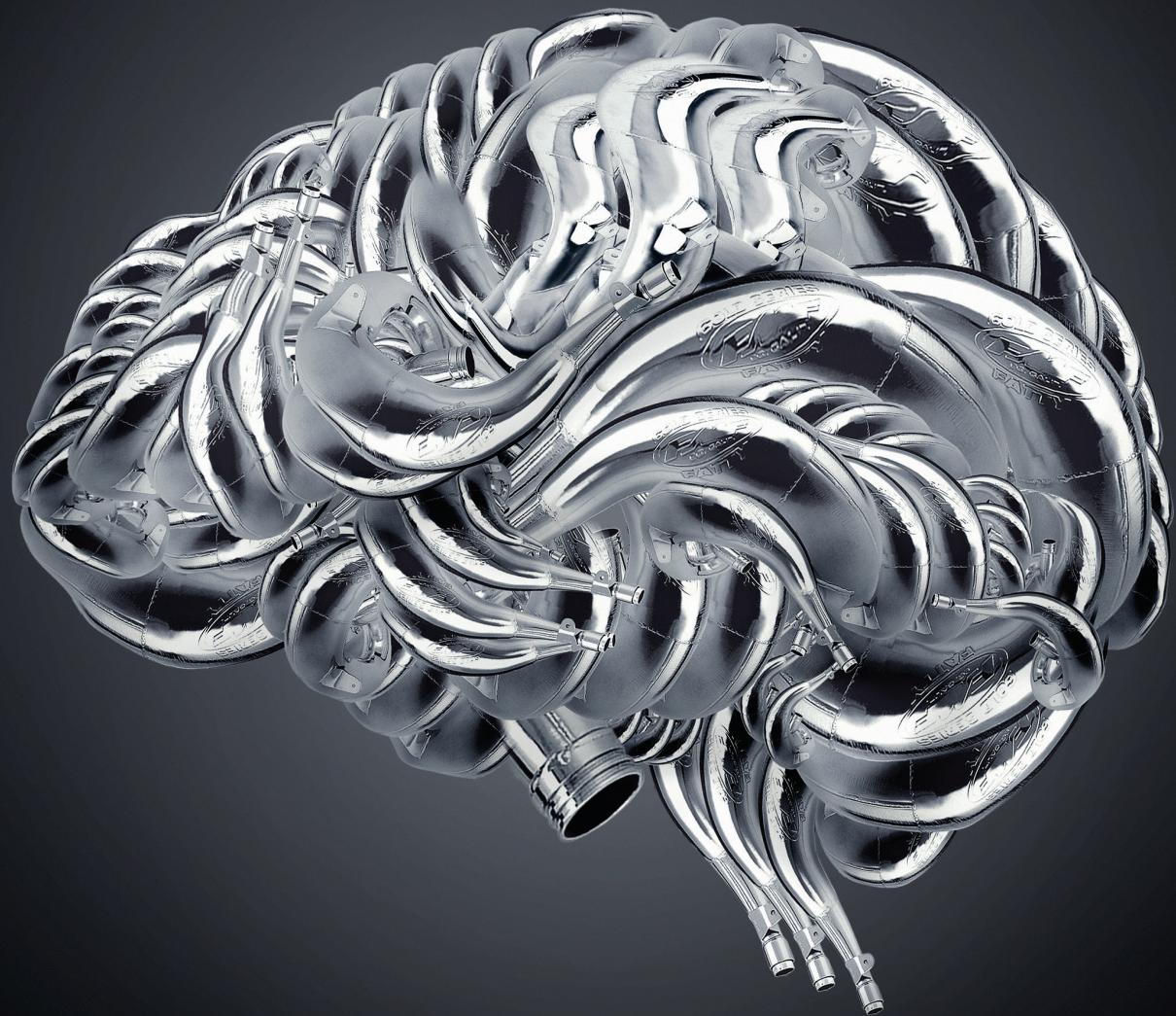
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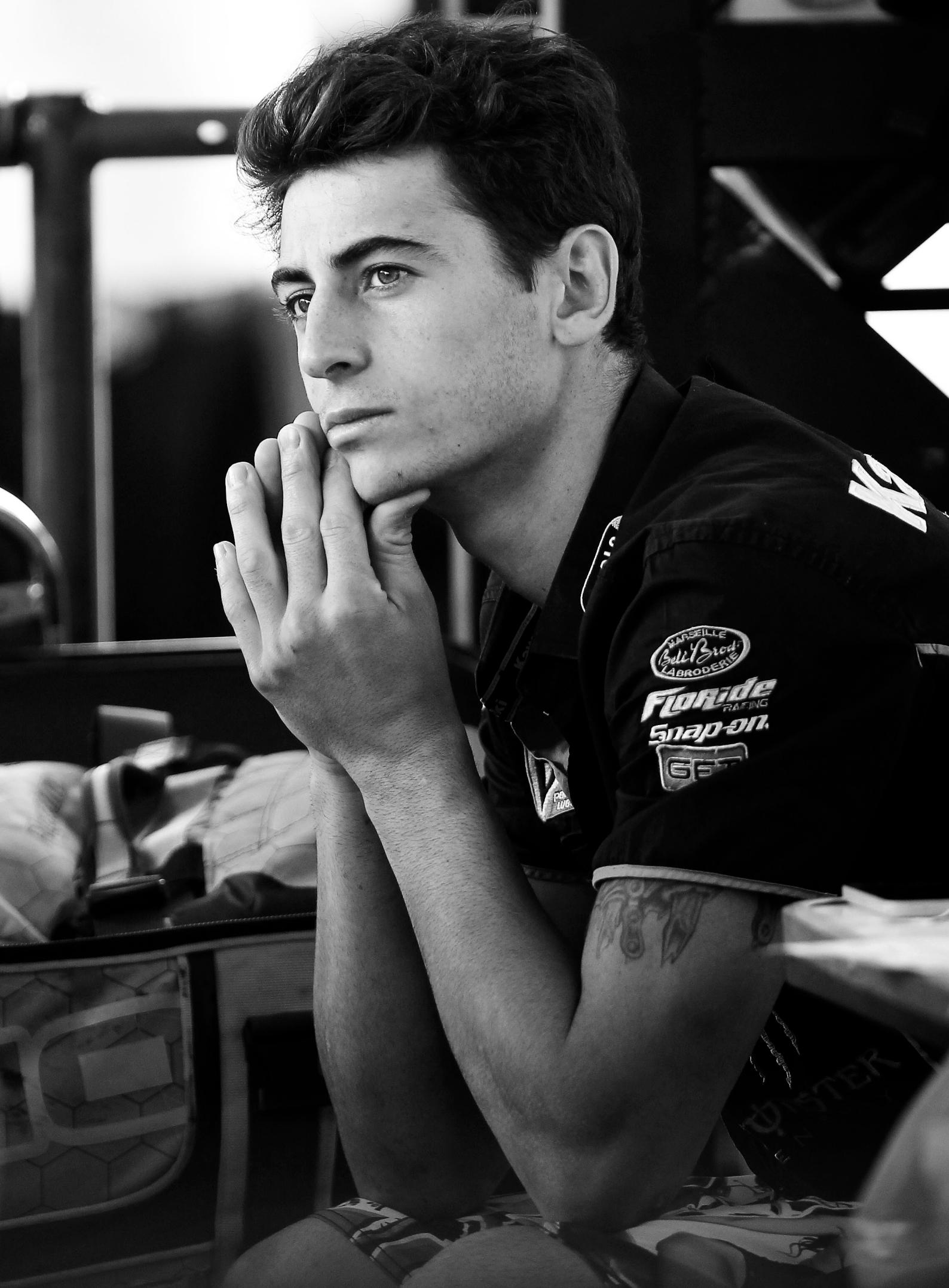
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Ricky Carmichael leads Stefan Everts - Geoff Meyer image





MXGP blast-off - Ray Archer image



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Jordi Tixier celebrates - Rau Archer/KTM image



Jeffrey Herlings and Jordi Tixier - Ray Archer/KTM image





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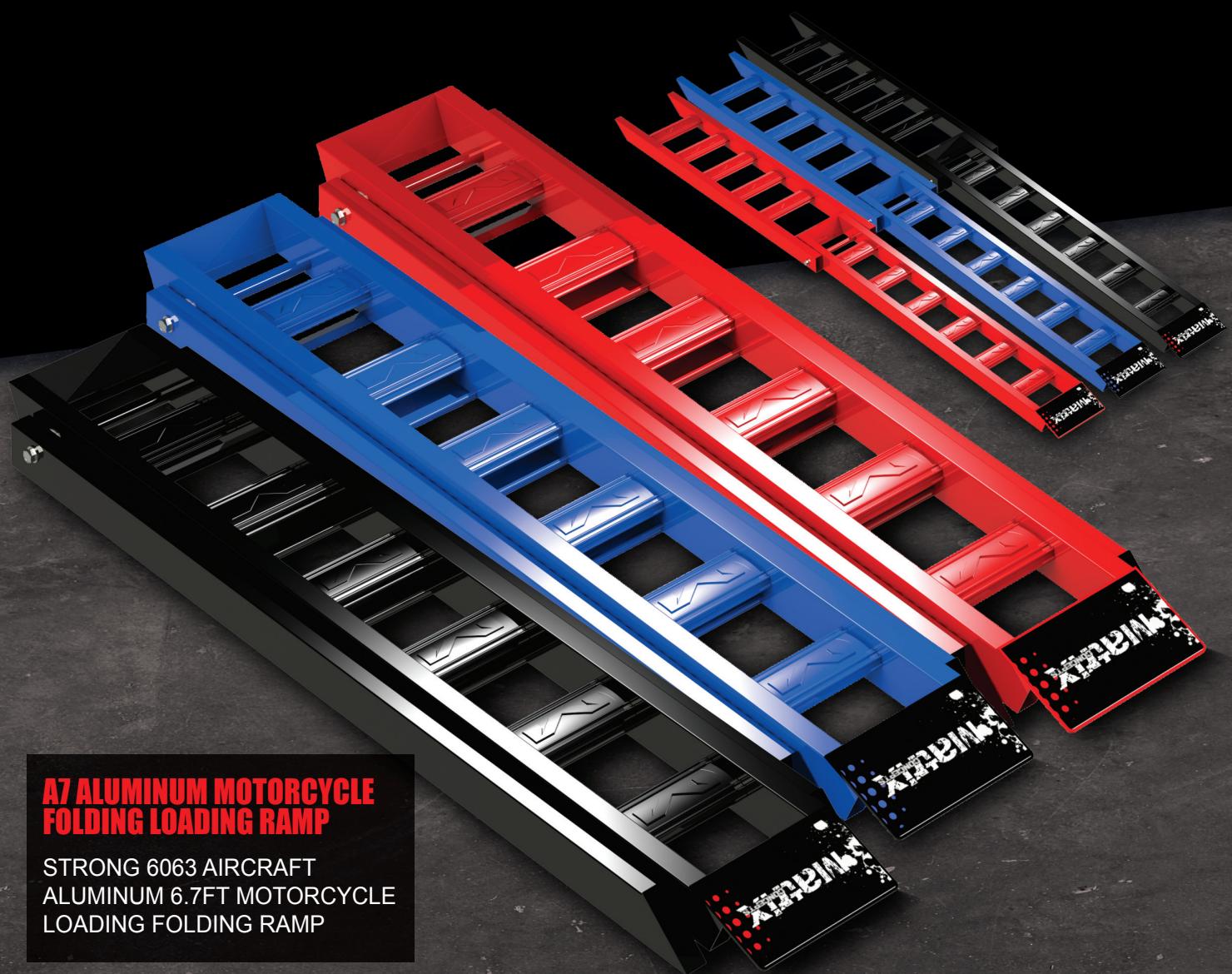
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